

Pierre ROUXEL

Redfern, NSW, 2016

Email: [REDACTED]

To: Native Vegetation Regulation Review
Conservation Policy and Strategy Section
Office of Environment and Heritage

August, 14th 2012

Dear Sir/Mme

SUBMISSION TO THE NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION REVIEW 2012

I am disappointed that the 2003 and 2005 Native Vegetation laws are now under review. The numerous proposed changes will certainly serve to weaken vital environmental protections that are currently in place. We should surely draw on the lessons of decades of uncontrolled land clearing, which resulted in the greatest threat to wildlife and vegetation in New South Wales, destroyed millions of hectares of fragile land and endangered numerous ecosystems.

Native vegetation provides incomparable economic, environmental and social benefits. It serves to protect wildlife habitat, but also to maintain the soil's health and preserve water quality. Numerous threatened species of mammals or birds are totally dependent on those sensitive ecosystems. That is why I am opposed to the changes currently proposed in the draft Native Vegetation Regulation 2012. I am totally convinced that those changes would endanger large areas of native vegetation and so considerably weaken these ecosystems.

Furthermore, I think that a majority of farmers in New South Wales could use current laws relating to Native Vegetation to their advantage and increase the value of their property by retaining the native vegetation. By making the clearing of "invasive" native species easier or enabling the thinning of native vegetation, there is a real risk of driving soil degradation due to the erosion and increasing salinity.

I do believe that the Native Vegetation Act 2003, which is underpinned by a robust methodology for the assessment of clearing environmental outcomes, has led to the stabilization of native vegetation in New South Wales. As a result, I consider the draft Native Vegetation Regulation 2012 to be a regression step which is likely to lead us back to a misinformed historical time when the view that land was wasted unless it was developed. On the contrary, land clearing is not a progressive process at all and New South Wales cannot afford to lose more areas of bushland or drive more species to extinction.

For those reasons, I implore you to adopt a balanced approach to this reform process and above all to reject proposals which would weaken the environmental protections contained in the Native Vegetation Act 2003.

Yours Sincerely
Pierre ROUXEL